

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 34, line 15 as follows:

AH The central lumen 53 extends to a radially outwardly extending step 57, producing a chamber 55 having a greater inside diameter than the lumen 53 at the opening 51. Chamber 55 is dimensioned to slideably receive an end of a guide tube 50 or 52 therein. The annular step 57 inhibits movement of the guide tube in the direction of opening 51. The stop may be manufactured in accordance with any of a variety of techniques, such as injection molding or machining from suitable materials including plastics and metal. ~~In one embodiment, the guide tube 52 comprises _____, and the stop comprises _____.~~ The end of the guide tube may be secured within chamber 55 using any of a variety of adhesives, solvent bonding, thermal bonding, interference fit or other techniques known in the art, or simply held in place by tension on the lace. In one embodiment, the tube 50 is bonded within the stop using _____.